

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of claims:

Claims 1-24. (Canceled)

25. (Currently amended) A receptacle having a proximal end and a distal end[[s]], comprising:

- ~~an inner wall and an outer wall defining an annular portion therebetween adapted for receiving liquid therein and~~ an outer wall and an inner wall fixed relative to said outer wall, said outer wall and inner wall together defining an annular portion therebetween; and

- an inner space defined by said inner wall open at each of said proximal end and [[a]] said distal end[[s]], enabling passage of fluid via said inner space whilst holding said liquid within said annular portion.

26. (Previously Presented) The receptacle according to claim 25, further comprising a conduit, adapted for insertion into the inner space so as to allow the fluid to exit therefrom via said conduit.

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 3 of 14

27. (Previously Presented) The receptacle according to claim 26, wherein said conduit is configured such that the flowing of a fluid there through imparts rotation to said receptacle.

28. (Previously Presented) The receptacle according to claim 25, for use in changing the temperature of a biological sample, said sample being characterized by a cross-sectional dimension along which the change of temperature may be performed with a predetermined acceptable resultant quality of the sample, wherein:

– said annular portion has a distance between said inner wall and said outer wall not exceeding said cross-sectional dimension of the sample.

29. (Previously Presented) The receptacle according to claim 27, wherein the receptacle has a longitudinal axis, a proximal end and a distal end, and the inner wall defines an inner space extending along said longitudinal axis, and a substantially round cross-section taken perpendicularly to the longitudinal axis, and the inner space is open at both the proximal end and distal end of the receptacle.

30. (Currently Amended) A method of changing the temperature of a liquid sample, comprising:

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 4 of 14

- a. providing a receptacle having an outer wall and an inner wall fixed relative to said outer wall, said outer wall and inner wall together defining an annular portion therebetween ~~inner and outer walls defining an annular portion therebetween~~ for receiving therein said liquid sample[~~(,)~~];
- b. inserting said liquid sample, at a first temperature, into said annular portion[~~(,)~~]; and
- c. exposing said receptacle to a second temperature different from said first temperature.

31. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein the liquid is a biological sample comprising sperm.

32. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein the receptacle has a longitudinal axis, a proximal end and a distal end, and the inner wall defines an inner space extending along said longitudinal axis.

33. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 30, wherein the receptacle has a longitudinal axis and a substantially round cross-section taken perpendicularly to the longitudinal axis.

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 5 of 14

34. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the inner space is open at both the proximal end and distal end of the receptacle.

35. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, further comprising providing an environment with a temperature gradient in a given direction and wherein step c is performed at least partially by passing the receptacle in said environment along said direction, with the longitudinal axis of the receptacle being parallel to said direction.

36. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 32, wherein the annular portion of the receptacle is sealed at the distal end and sealable at the proximal end of the receptacle.

37. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 36, wherein the annular portion is sealable at the proximal end of the receptacle by a plug having a corresponding annular sealing portion.

38. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein the plug has a bore surrounded by the annular sealing portion and said bore is adapted to be aligned with the inner space of the receptacle providing a passage thereto.

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 6 of 14

39. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 37, wherein the plug is made of a resilient material.

40. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 37, wherein the method further comprises after step **b**, sealing the annular portion at the proximal end of the receptacle with the annular sealing portion of the plug.

41. (Previously Presented) The method according to Claim 37, wherein there is a wand associated with the plug, and wherein the step of sealing the annular portion of the receptacle at the proximal end thereof is performed by:

- i. inserting the plug into the proximal end of the receptacle so that a portion of said wand enters the annular portion of the receptacle together with said annular sealing portion of the plug, whereby sealing of the annular portion of the receptacle is prevented in the area of contact of the wand with one of the inner or outer walls of the receptacle, and
- ii. removing the wand such that the proximal end of the annular portion of the receptacle becomes fully sealed.

42. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 30, wherein step **c** comprises providing a heat transfer fluid at the second temperature for flowing

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 7 of 14

around the receptacle and into the inner space via one of the proximal or distal ends and out of the other.

43. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 42 further comprising, before step c:

1. providing a conduit tightly insertable in the inner space of the receptacle at the proximal end thereof, being adapted to direct the heat transfer fluid flowing out of the inner space so as not to enter the annular portion, and
2. inserting said conduit into the inner space at said proximal end.

44. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 43, wherein the conduit is configured, such that the flowing of the heat transfer fluid therethrough imparts rotation to the receptacle.

45. (Currently Amended) A chamber for facilitating changing the temperature of a liquid sample held within a receptacle, ~~said receptacle~~ comprising:

- a cavity for receiving said receptacle;
- an inlet for inputting a heat transfer fluid into said cavity,

wherein the receptacle comprises:

a proximal end and a distal end[[s]];

MAIL STOP AMENDMENT
Attorney Docket No. 26478U
Page 8 of 14

an outer wall and an inner wall fixed relative to said outer wall,
said outer wall and inner wall together defining an annular portion an
~~inner wall and an outer wall defining an annular portion~~ therebetween for
receiving liquid therein; and

an inner space defined by said inner wall open at each of said
proximal and distal ends;

~~said chamber comprising:~~

- ~~—— a cavity for receiving said receptacle, and~~
- ~~—— an inlet for inputting a heat transfer fluid into said cavity.~~

46. (New) The receptacle according to claim 25, wherein the inner wall is
securely fixed in place within the receptacle and configured sufficient to prevent
said inner wall from longitudinal movement with respect to said outer wall.